ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of the First Session

OF THE

Baptist Sunday School ...Convention...

OF THE
Coosa River Baptist
Association

HELD WITH
Pleasant Grove
Church

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

...MAY 28th and 29th, 1898...

MINUTES

— OF —

THE FIRST SESSION

OF THE

Baptist Sunday School Convention

OF THE

Coosa River Baptist Association

HELD WITH

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH

Saturday and Sunday, May 28 and 29,
...1898...

OFFICERS:

J. L. WILKES, President. E. HORN, Secretary.
E. D. ACKER, Vice President First District.
S. W. WELCH, Vice President Second District.
F. D. FUNDERBURG, Vice Pres. Third District.

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD:

J. H. HAYDEN. A. A. HUTTO. J. D. DAVIS.
ELI HORN. JNO. C. WILLIAMS.
S. P. BURNS. G. S. HAM.

PRESS OF OUR MOUNTAIN HOME,
TALLADEGA, ALA.,
1898.

On motion of F. G. Mullen, C. S. Johnson was elected chairman pro tem and E. Horn, secretary pro tem.

The following Sunday schools were reported and delegates enrolled:

Alpine—A. A. Hutto, W. H. Allen.
Salem, (Eastaboga)—E. Horn, H. R. Donaldson.
Dry Valley—John McPherson, J. N. Nelson.
Hepzibah—A. F. Jones.
Sylacauga—J. L. Wilkes, Mrs. S. A. Fluker.
Spring Creek, (Vincent)—R. A. Kidd.
Winterboro—Calvert Gooden, Lilden Blanchard.
Providence, (Tall. Co.)—R. W. Brown, I. A. Adams.
Pleasant Grove—T. E. Ogletree, B. S. Elliott.
Refuge—S. A. Burton, W. M. Hall.
Lincoln—E. D. Acker, J. F. Davis.
Talladega—C. W. Stringer, J. B. Graham, P. S. Williams.
Cropwell—J. R. Roberson, Mrs. J. R. Roberson.
Coosa Valley—J. A. Collins.
Tallasahatchie—G. W. Gardner.

The following were messengers from churches having no Sunday schools:

Ironaton—G. O. Vise.
Blue Eye—L. M. Madden, M. D. Beavers.

On motion of E. D. Acker, the following committee was appointed on permanent organization, with F. B. Lanier chairman: F. B. Lanier, J. L. Wilkes, J. A. Woodward, J. R. Roberson and A. A. Hutto.

E. D. Acker addressed the house on "The Objects of This Convention."

The Committee on Permanent Organization reported as follows:

We, your Committee on Permanent Organization, beg to submit the following:

J. L. Wilkes, President.
E. Horn, Secretary.
C. W. Stringer, Treasurer.
E. D. Acker, Vice President, First District.
S. W. Welch, Vice President, Second District.
F. D. Funderburg, Vice President, Third District.

F. B. Lanier, Chairman.

The report was adopted.

Adjourned to 1:30 P. M.

1:30 P. M.

Convention called to order by Chairman. Devotional exercises conducted by J. F. Davis.

J. A. Woodward addressed the convention on "The Field and Its Needs," followed by F. G. Mullen, E. D. Acker, A. A. Hutto, C. S. Johnson and others. The discussion closed with the adoption of the following resolutions, presented by J. L. Wilkes:

RESOLVED, That the Sunday school board appointed by the last session of the Coosa River Association together with the Vice Presidents appointed by this body, are requested to ascertain what schools, if any, in their respective districts, need financial assistance in procuring Sunday school literature; to make record and report any community or church that has no Sunday school; that the said board make a report to the next association and ask that body to solicit contributions and create a fund to be disbursed by said board as it may deem best.

RESOLVED 2D, That the Secretary is hereby instructed to have minutes of this convention printed and distributed among the Sunday schools of the Coosa River Association, asking that they make a special report at the next session of this convention.

RESOLVED 3D, That the Secretary shall turn over all funds in his possession, after necessary expenses of printing and distributing Minutes has been paid.

RESOLVED 4TH, That the Sunday school board which has charge of our Sunday school work in this association shall act as Executive Committee and make such renumeration to the Secretary as they deem proper and right. A. A. HUTTO.

The convention then adjourned with prayer to meet Sunday at 9:00 A. M.

SUNDAY, MAY 29.

The convention was called to order at 9:00 A. M., and the devotional services conducted by chairman.

At 9:30 A. M. a Sunday school mass meeting was conducted by J. H. Hayden, president of the Sunday school board.

At 11 A. M. C. S. Johnson preached from Matthew 7: 24–27. Theme, "Character Building."

Adjourned till 2:00 P. M.

2:00 P. M.

The convention was called to order by the chairman, and praise service conducted by the choir.

At 2:30 P. M. J. B. Graham addressed the convention on "Loyal Baptists." By motion, it was ordered that the address, "Loyal Baptists," be published in the minutes of this convention.

The following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, That the Sunday school board, which has charge of our work in this association, agree upon the number of minutes to be printed and make such renumeration to the Secretary as it deems proper.

A. A. HUTTO.

The following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, That J. H. Hayden, E. D. Acker and J. L. Wilkes be appointed to bear fraternal greetings to the Talladega County Union Sunday School Convention soon to convene at Lincoln, Ala.

A. A. HUTTO.

RESOLUTION OF THANKS.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this convention are hereby expressed to the members of Pleasant Grove Church and citizens of the community for their unbounded hospitality and kindness shown to this body in session and to visitors present.

E. D. ACKER.

Adopted by a rising vote.

After prayer by T. K. Trotter, the convention adjourned sine die.

J. L. WILKES, PRESIDENT.

E. HORN, SECRETARY.

J. B. GRAHAM'S ADDRESS.

(Yielding to the request of the Sunday School Convention of the Coosa River Association, I have endeavored to give a synopsis of a talk which was wholly extemporaneous.
J. B. GRAHAM.)

LOYAL BAPTISTS.

LOYALTY.

Loyalty is a great quality. Every one is loyal to something or somebody. The trouble with the world is that too many people are loyal to evil causes and bad people, and too few are loyal to righteous causes and good people. Would that all loyalty were in the cause of right.

BAPTISTS MISUNDERSTOOD AND MISREPRESENTED.

If evangelical churches—the different denominations—knew more about themselves and one another there would no longer exist any bitterness, envy and wicked church pride. I am glad that the days of controversial wars among Christians are gone.

It is not wholly the fault of other denominations that they misunderstand and misrepresent us. Baptists are safe on the question of belief. The trouble with us is that we are the most believing and about the least doing people in the world. If we would practice only half we believe, we would lead hosts of willing captives into our Master's kingdom.

NOT FOR IGNORANCE.

Our denomination does not stand for ignorance, either in the pulpit or pew, though we have many illiterate ministers and members. Our people in cities and more prosperous country communities rank with the best in intelligence and the power of the pulpit and pew. The cause of education is coming on and the Baptist hosts are in the front rank.

So far as I know, the only institution in the United States devoted exclusively to the education of ministers, and having no organic connection with any secular school work, is the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky. Nearly every State in the

Union has a Baptist college, and unfortunately for us, some States attempt to have more than one.

BAPTIST MISTAKES.

The time was with our people when we thought that there was no work for young people to do, and we gave but slight encouragement to Sunday school work. The time was when we thought that preaching and all church work might be done without special preparation and system. We are now in much better condition, but I fear that some of these hindrances are still with us.

We need this associational Sunday school convention to train our people, young and old, for special work and special fitness for work in our Lord's vineyard. A man cannot be born in the full stature of a man into the kingdom, for Paul says ye are babes in Christ. The Christian life is one of growth as much so as the physical life. A man must prepare for his work. When you have the fever you call a physician, not a farmer; when the grand locomotive is to draw its load of precious freight, you call an engineer, not a butcher; when the mighty ship is to plough the deep you call the sailor pilot, not a lawyer; when the legions are ready for war, you call the soldier general, not a mule driver. Why then should we think that, in the affairs of the kingdom of our God, a man can do his work on a moment's notice and without preparation? Is not his kingdom more than meat and drink? If men must prepare to do the things of time, what shall we say of the things of Eternity?

The kingdom of grace is one of growth. "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ"—2d Pet. 3:18. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."—2d Pet. 1:5–9.

DENOMINATIONAL TRAINING.

I believe in denominational education, but I despise sectarian bigotry. Let us have denominational instruction not for controversial purposes, but to increase Christian intelligence. Every denomination ought to maintain its own Sunday schools, because the only place to successfully inform and firmly establish a people in the doctrine of their church is in the Sunday school. If your church has a foundation, don't be ashamed to know it and let other people know it. The man who thinks that one church is just as good for

him as another church, isn't worth much to any church. A man must believe something before he can or will do anything. Men don't strive to succeed in causes in which they do not believe. Baptist loyalty demands that we stand by our faith and instruct the young of our congregations in the doctrines of our church.

CHURCHES ARE FOUNDED ON SOMETHING.

Baptists believe that the church is a spiritual, not a secular, body. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, whom do men say that I, the Son of Man am? And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." It was then that he put the most momentous question of the ages—not only to them, but to you, to me, to millions yet unborn—the question whose answer will tell out in an eternity of life or an eternity of death—"But whom do ye say that I am?" Then it was that Peter—impetuous, tempestuous, courageous, magnificent man that he was—because he was a man—rose to the majesty of the occasion and gave the only confession of faith that any child of God need ever give—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then the Master said, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matt. 16:13–19. It is not sufficient that we give intellectual assent that Christ is the Son of the living God, that flesh and blood reveal him unto us; but the Spirit of the living God must breathe upon our spirits, quicken and vitalize them with the truth, the consciousness that we are his, and that "he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

CONVERTED MEMBERSHIP.

Loyal Baptists believe that only those who have this spiritual experience and consciousness of the Christ, the Son of the living God, in their own hearts, are prepared to be a part of the church.

"They that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day about 3,000 souls were added to them."—Acts 2:41. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." —Acts 2:47. Phillip preached Jesus to the Eunuch, (and, my brethren, you don't have to preach anything else now), when he would save him. When the Eunuch saw much water and said "What doth hinder that I be baptized? Phillip said if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. The Eunuch said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God. And they went down both into the water, both Phillip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him."—Acts 8:35–38.

It is a dangerous thing for one who has not had this spiritual conception and regeneration to join the church. It is so easy for a feeling of security to grow upon one and for him to trust the church, instead of the Lord, to save him.

BAPTISM.

Baptists believe that only immersion is baptism, but they do not believe that it is essential to salvation. It is only a church ordinance, the answer of a good conscience, a badge which the Christian puts on, typifying his death to sin, the burial of the old man, and the resurrection of a new man to a new life.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Loyal Baptists are accused of being selfish, illmannered possibly, on communion days. It is not our table, but the Lord's; not our supper, but the Lord's; not taken in memory of one another, but in memory of His sufferings and death.

We believe that only church members should partake of the broken body and spilt blood. Our Lord "ate the passover with his disciples" and not with the world. "And when the hour was come, he sat down and the twelve apostles with him."—Mark 14:22–25: Luke 22:14–21; 1st Cor. 11:24–29.

Believing, as we do, that only converted and baptized persons should be members of the church, and that baptism is by immersion at the hands of one scripturally set apart for the holy office, Baptists partake of the Lord's supper with their brethren in the faith, remembering only the Lamb on Calvary slain.

FINAL PERSEVERANCE.

We believe in a perfect and complete salvation. We worship God as one who does nothing by halves. We do not believe in sinless perfection in this life, for a Christian, at best, is only a sinner saved by grace. The trouble with us is that too many think that when God has done his work, there's nothing for them to do. "Faith without works is dead." Ponder well the scripture, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing that they crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to open shame."—Hebrews 6:4–6.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—St. John 10:27–29.

Shall we deny the faith and the comfort of the magnetic and eloquent man of all the ages in his glorious tribute to God's love? "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:38-39.

CHRISTIAN LOYALTY.

Loyal Baptists, after all, are nothing more nor less than loyal Christians. O, that every church might learn the power of loyalty. At this hour, down by the waters of the Mexic sea, are thousands of brave and patriotic young men who swelter in the noon day heat. Tonight their upturned faces will be kissed by the light of the stars, and in their dreams they'll go back to the luxuries and loves of their happy homes. They are ready at the drum beat and bugle blast to rush to arms, not to drive back an invading foe, but to go forward into other shores to give liberty to the down-trodden of a strange and alien land. Why is it? Their country has called and they falter not to ask the reason why. O, my brethren of the Army of the Cross, the great Captain who came from Edom with dyed garments from Bozra, calls from Calvary's brow for us to drive out the invading foe. I believe that loyal Baptists, loyal Methodists and loyal Presbyterians will rally to this battle cry, and while each will and should be true to its own colors, still the blood-stained banner will be the flag of us all.

DON'T BE IMPATIENT.

Take care of the small things. Don't be discouraged. "Trust in the Lord and he shall bring it to pass." If you have but a few, teach them all the more. It were better to thoroughly ground and establish a half dozen in the Baptist faith than to have a hundred grounded in no faith at all. If you have strength enough to have a Baptist church you have strength enough for a Baptist Sunday school. Despise not the day of small things and grow not weary of well doing. "The crimson streak on ocean's cheek tells of the coming dawn."

"Sometime when all life's lessons have been learned
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which in our weak judgment here we spurned,
The things over which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash out of life's dark night,
As stars shine brighter in deeper tints of blue,
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,
And how what seemed reproof was love most true."

LIST OF BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN COOSA RIVER ASSOCIATION.

Antioch.
Salem, (Eastaboga).
Refuge.
Lincoln.
Dry Valley.
Pleasant Grove.
Providence, (Tall. Co.)
Hepzibah.
Cartersville, (Lanier's.)
Alpine.
Coosa Valley.
Cropwell.
Riverside.
Seddon.
Winterboro.
Tallasahatchie.
Sycamore.
Sylacauga.
Talladega.
Fayetteville.
Childersburg.
Wilsonville.
Harpersville.
Spring Creek, (Vincent.)
Eureka.
Kymulga.
Cruise School House.

LIST OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN COOSA RIVER ASSOCIATION HAVING NO SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Munford.
Ironaton.
Blue Eye.
Renfroe.
Pilgrim's Rest.
Rocky Mount.
Mount Sharan.
New Hope.
Providence, (Shelby Co.)
Macedonia.
Mount Ida.
Oak Grove.

FINANCIAL TABLE.

Salem	$ 1 00	Alpine (pledged)	$ 1 00
Refuge	1 60	Tallasahatchie	25
Lincoln	6 16	Sylacauga	1 00
Dry Valley	25	Public Collection	8 10
Talladega	5 00		
		Total	$24 36